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May the Road Rise Up to Meet You - the story behind the traditional Irish blessing

What does May the Road Rise Up to Meet You really mean? The story of the most popular Irish blessing.

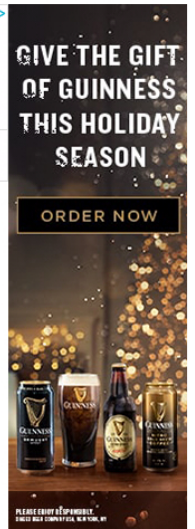
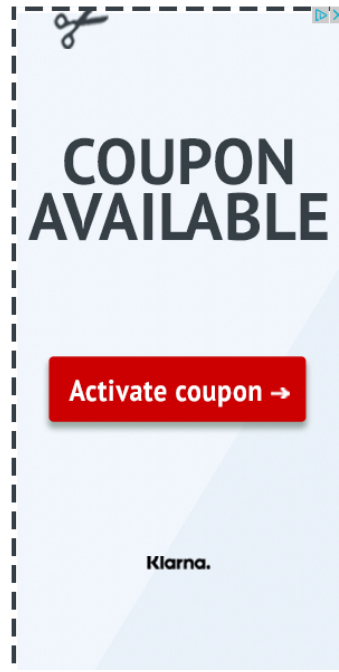
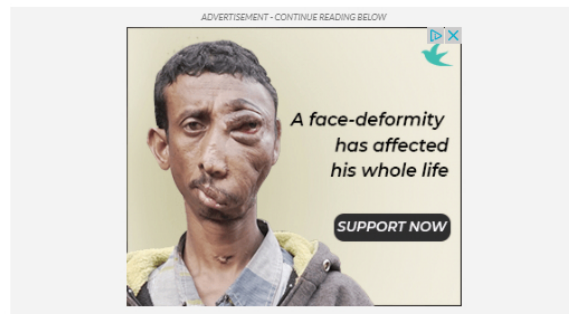
James Wilson @jameswilson1919 Sep 20, 2021



It's the most well-known Irish blessing, but what exactly are the origins of the much-loved blessing May the Road Rise Up to Meet You?

In full, the blessing, which is also used as a prayer, reads as follows:

*May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.*



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Originally written in [the Irish language](#), the prayer – the author is unknown – has three main images, namely wind, sun, and rain.

Fittingly for something written so long ago, the ancient Irish's deep connection to nature and Ireland's ever-changing elements shine through.

The reference to the wind is thought to be a reference to the Holy Spirit, who came as a "mighty wind" at Pentecost.



The prayer has three main images- wind, sun, and rain

The sun's warmth alludes to God's Mercy which the New Testament (Luke 1:78, NIV) tells us "by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven."

The mention of rain is thought to be symbolic of God's provision – nothing will grow without the rain.



The mention of rain in the blessing is thought to be symbolic of God's provision

In Irish, the first line "Go n-éirí an bóthar leat" more literally usually translated as "May you succeed on the road" the French equivalent of which is "bon voyage."

It makes for a perfect toast for a wedding or going away party!

* Originally published in 2017. Updated in 2021.

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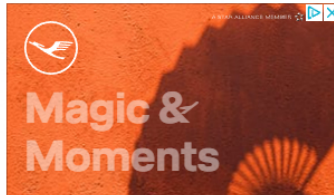
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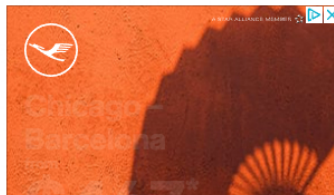
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